

A display in the Splendid Fairy-wren *Malurus splendens* — Sedgwick, 1956 (Bird Life at Woorooloo — 2, *West. Aust. Nat.* 5:63-70) describes what he thought was an unusual display in the Splendid Fairy-wren *Malurus splendens*, but was uncertain if he had observed correctly. I have twice witnessed the same or similar display in the species and it is thus worth publishing my observations too.

On 24 November 1968, when in Jarrah *Eucalyptus marginata* forest about 6 km north of Dwellingup, I observed a fully-plumaged male displaying like Sedgwick describes. It was apparently facing something unknown to me and had the frontal crown feathers raised in a disc-like shape. The ear-coverts were also raised and projected from the head at right-angles. Upon seeing me the bird slowly flattened these feathers to their normal positions and it then disappeared into the scrub. On 7 December 1968, near the same place, I observed another fully-plumaged male displaying similarly.

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Nesting of the Fairy Tern *Sterna nereis* at the Causeway — Storr and Johnstone 1988 (Birds of the Swan Coastal Plain and adjacent seas and islands, *Rec. West. Aust. Mus. Suppl.* 28) cite two instances of the Fairy Tern *Sterna nereis* nesting in the Swan River Estuary: South Perth (1930) and Pelican Point (1984).

However a record for the Causeway comes from the author T.A.G. Hungerford who as a boy used to live in South Perth and range to the Causeway. In his book *Red Rover All Over* (1986, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, W.A.) he states the following:

“It always took a long time to get to the Causeway, what with stopping to look for nests . . .

We swam the channel and climbed up on the other side, and before we'd gone a few steps . . . we were attacked by a great mob of tiny seagulls. I'd never seen anything like them before, very dainty, with black caps on their heads and long forked tails like swallows. I found out later on they were Fairy Terns, real sea birds which had never before been known to build on the river.

. . . we began to look for eggs — on the ground . . .

It was a long time before we located one, but once we found one we immediately saw a hundred . . . In some nests there were two beautiful little eggs. They were about the size of a pigeon's, all dark green and black and brown splotches, lying on beds of dried seaweed . . . In other nests there were two chicks . . .”

In a personal communication Mr Hungerford states:

“ . . . it would have been when I was about 12, which would make it 1927 . . . That egg was also identified at the Perth Museum.”

Mr Hungerford's description and his date of it makes it a valid breeding record for the Fairy Tern.

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